

REMARKS

Pending in the present application are claims 1-10, of which claims 1 and 6 are independent claims. In the Office Action, claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Discenzo (U.S. Patent No. 6,434,512) in view of Hartel (U.S. Patent No. 5,454,074), and claims 6-10 were allowed.

Independent claim 1 of the present application is directed toward a method for recording and analyzing reliability data for an aircraft. The method comprises: obtaining and logging warranty-based reliability data from maintenance records generated during the performance of any routine or non-routine tasks that may exist, and which pertain to rotatable parts of the aircraft; obtaining and logging maintenance program-based reliability data from maintenance records generated during the performance of any non-routine tasks that may exist; identifying for each non-routine task, a routine task whose performance resulted in the generation of the non-routine task; obtaining and logging maintenance program-based reliability data from maintenance records generated during the performance of any identified routine tasks that may exist; and analyzing and reporting the warranty-based reliability data and the maintenance program-based reliability data.

In accordance with the present application, reliability data includes, but is not limited to, data relating to, "when [the parts] were installed, when [the parts] were removed, what were the non-routine tasks performed in [the parts'] life cycle . . .", and so forth. (Page 25, lines 14-18.) Reliability data may be used to evaluate whether or not a rotatable part (i.e., those parts which can be repaired) is meeting a manufacturer's predicted life limit, and/or to modify a maintenance program. (Page 25, lines 19-25.)

To establish a *prima facie* case under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974), M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests the invention of independent claims 1. First, the cited references do not relate to a method of recording and analyzing reliability data. Second, the cited references fail to teach or suggest obtaining and logging reliability data from maintenance records.

The method disclosed by the Discenzo reference is used for the purpose of machinery diagnosis and failure prediction, rather than for the recording and analyzing reliability data. In the Discenzo reference, raw motor data (e.g., the amount of brake wear) is directly obtained from one or more vehicle subsystems for the purpose of "determining a health state of the individual subsystems . . ." (e.g., a real-time measurement of brake life remaining). (Col. 2, lines 48-50; Col. 6, lines 33-40; Col. 19, lines 34-39.) A vehicle subsystem may be an engine, drive train, suspension, fuel system, or coolant system. (Col. 17, lines 51-54.) Specifically, a sensor is attached to a vehicle subsystem, and the sensor inputs the raw motor data into a diagnostics module. (Col. 1, lines 19-20; Col. 2, lines 36-40; Col. 6, lines 33-40.) In contrast, claim 1 of the present invention recites obtaining and logging reliability data from maintenance records. Discenzo fails to disclose such a method.

Hartel also fails to teach or suggest a method for recording and analyzing reliability data. Hartel teaches a method of displaying and executing checklist procedures relating to the operation of an airplane, and does not relate to reliability data. (Col. 1, lines 11-14.)

Discenzo and Hartel fail to teach or suggest a method for recording and analyzing reliability data that includes obtaining and logging warranty-based reliability data and maintenance program-based reliability data from maintenance records, as claim 1 recites. As such, claim 1 is patentable over Discenzo in view of Hartel. Claims 2-5 depend from independent claim 1 and are allowable therewith. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that the combinations of features recited in dependent claims 2-5 are patentable on their own merits, although this does not need to be specifically addressed herein since any claim depending from a patentable independent claim is also patentable. See M.P.E.P. § 2143.03, citing *In re Fine*, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

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In light of the above arguments, the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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